

**STRATEGY
RESEARCH
PROJECT**

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**"THE POLITICAL GENERAL":
CHALLENGES FOR STRATEGIC LEADERS**

BY

**LIEUTENANT COLONEL JOHN J. TWOHIG
United States Army**

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by

Lieutenant Colonel John Joe Twohig
United States Army

Dr. Herbert F. Barber
Project Advisor

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U.S. Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013

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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: John Joe Twohig (LTC), USA

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Strategic Military Leaders manage national level relationships and represent their organization to the President, Congress, and the American people. These leaders must possess certain competencies to successfully interact in this environment. This study analyzes competencies identified in FM 22-103 as demonstrated by General Marshall during his period as Army Chief of Staff; identifies implications of the Goldwater-Nichols Act on competency requirements; and analyzes those competencies exhibited by General Powell while serving as Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff. This study concludes by identifying enduring competencies and those that have changed over time and provides recommendations for strategic leader development.

Introduction

Strategic military leaders' success quite often depends on their ability to influence various audiences outside of their organizational environment. General Marshall's handling of the challenges of reconstituting the Army prior to World War II demanded this ability and proved key to his success.

"It became clear to me that at the age of 58 I would have to learn new tricks that were not taught in the military manuals or on the battlefield. In this position I am a political soldier and will have to put my training in rapping-out orders and making snap decisions on the back burner, and have to learn the arts of persuasion and guile. I must become an expert in a whole new set of skills."¹

Attributed to George C. Marshall

The skills General Marshall mentions form the foundation for current doctrinal strategic leader competencies.

Today, senior military leaders face a post-Cold War environment that continues to grow in complexity and uncertainty. The successful implementation of the national security strategy depends heavily on their ability to effectively interface "within the Clausewitzian trinity--the government, the people and the . . . (military)."² As with General Marshall, today's strategic military leader must identify those skills necessary to successfully interface with the Administration, the Congress, and the American people.

This study examines a historical and a current example of the interactions between senior political and strategic military leaders. This paper initially reviews current doctrinal thought concerning strategic leader tasks and requisite competencies as outlined in DA PAM 600-80: Executive Leadership and FM 22-103

(DRAFT): Strategic Leadership. This study then analyzes competencies demonstrated by General Marshall during his period as Army Chief of Staff; identifies implications on competency requirements generated by the National Security Act of 1947 as modified by the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986; and analyzes those exhibited by General Powell while serving as Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS). Even though Marshall was Chief of Staff of the Army while Powell performed the duties of CJCS, Marshall's relationships with the President, Congress, and the American people approximate the relationships experienced by Powell. The paper concludes by identifying enduring competencies and those that have changed over time along with providing recommendations on strategic leader development.

Framework for Analysis

Prior to reviewing the Marshall and Powell eras, it is necessary to review current doctrine and define essential terms that will help create the framework to be used in this analysis.

Frame of Reference

As they assume strategic roles, military leaders' frame of reference shifts from predominately inside the military organization. . .

". . . to outside the organization -- looking toward having an impact on the environment, to shape the environment so that it presents a more favorable set of opportunities for action to the organization."³

This shift in perspective proves to be one of the major criteria that differentiates the strategic from the operational leader.

The strategic leader continuously operates either in or with an awareness of the external environment. This external perspective provides the necessary understanding to influence opinion and develop understanding of the military needs and purposes external to the organization. If strategic leaders want to move the military organization forward, their frame of reference must expand to include this appreciation for the external environment⁴.

Strategic Leader Tasks

Before identifying and defining the competencies required for the strategic military leaders' successful interaction with the political leadership, one must first identify the key tasks required of the strategic leader. "The job the strategic leader must do will determine whether he or she has brought the right competencies to the job."⁵ Of the key strategic leader tasks identified in DA PAM 600-80 and FM 22-103, two relate to the external environment: managing national-level relationships and representing the organization.

Managing National-Level Relationships

Managing national-level relationships requires that strategic leaders interact with the over-arching national policy apparatus to "influence opinion and build consensus for organizational roles, missions, and objectives ... and to ... garner support of diverse players so the organizational vision can be achieved."⁶ The specific requirements of this task range

from interpreting national policy guidelines and directives to bridging the gap between the political decisions made and the individuals who carry out those decisions. Even though all sub-tasks require some degree of interaction with the political leadership, three stress this interaction: providing advice and counsel in national policy formulation; planning jointly for the maintenance of military capabilities; and presenting the organization's requirements for resources and capabilities.⁷

Representing the Organization

Strategic leaders represent the military to agencies external to their organization in a manner that increases understanding of their organization. The strategic military leader interacts with a wide variety of people and organizations outside the military. This interaction requires that the leader regularly communicate with leaders in Congress and the Administration, act as a spokesperson for the organization with other federal agencies, the media, and the public, to include building and maintaining an information network that assists in understanding and influencing the environment. Because these interactions are predominately lateral, strategic military leaders must rely more on interpersonal skills to build support for their ideas.⁸

Strategic Leader Competencies

Competencies are attributes of strategic leaders reflected in their behavior - what leaders do in their job that makes a

difference.⁹ Competencies include "the knowledge, skills, attributes, and capacities which enable a leader to perform his/her required tasks."¹⁰ "It is the difference between two individuals at the same level in the same job, one who is doing superior work while the other is doing average work."¹¹ Strategic leader competencies fall under three categories: conceptual, technical, and interpersonal. When supported by a comprehensive frame of reference, these competencies provide strategic leaders the tools required to deal with the challenging issues and events of the complex and uncertain strategic environment.¹²

Conceptual Competencies

Conceptual competencies include: frame of reference development, problem management, and envisioning the future. These competencies do not directly deal with the interaction between the strategic military and political leader. However, frame of reference development is a knowledge structure of the environment that provides strategic leaders the understanding of the cause and effect factors which influence interrelationships outside the organization.¹³ This includes understanding "that tasks are best accomplished by demonstrating an understanding and appreciation for the point of view of others."¹⁴

Technical Competencies

Technical competencies include an understanding of: organizational systems, Joint and Combined relations, and

political and social sensitivities. The knowledge of political and social sensitivities plays a key role in effective interaction with the political leadership. Political and social competence requires that strategic leaders "participate effectively in the interdepartmental process in national security policy formulation and execution."¹⁵ Leaders use this competency when advising on policy development, preparing strategy, and attempting to receive resourcing to properly implement the strategy.¹⁶

Interpersonal Competencies

FM 22-103 identifies three interpersonal competencies necessary for strategic leaders to be successful. Those competencies include the ability to: build consensus inside the organization and with external organizations, negotiate with external organizations to influence the external environment, and communicate both internally and externally.¹⁷

Strategic leaders build consensus not only inside the organization but with federal agencies and Congress as well. Leaders use this competency to gain the support necessary to make organizational plans and programs a reality. The complicated process of consensus building requires effective reasoning and logic. This process could last over extended periods and may require compromise to reach the desired goal. Strategic leaders may find partial achievement of organizational objectives preferable to no achievement at all. Strategic leaders recognize that at a later time the dynamics of the external environment may

shift favorably thus allowing a more complete achievement of organizational objectives.¹⁸

Since many of the external relationships established are lateral, strategic military leaders rely heavily on negotiating skills to obtain outcomes favorable to the organization. Interpersonal skills such as "listening, diagnosing unspoken agendas, and the capacity to detach oneself personally from the negotiating process"¹⁹ form the basis for successful negotiations. "They understand that negotiations are best accomplished by demonstrating an understanding and appreciation for the point of view of others"²⁰ while maintaining the "ability to stand firm on non-negotiable points while simultaneously communicating respect for other participants."²¹

Even though negotiations and consensus building have similar requirements for understanding the position of others, using powers of persuasion, and allowing some concessions they differ in their final objective. Consensus building seeks to reach a position acceptable to all parties that accomplishes a common goal. Negotiations operates under the premise that the negotiator has a bottom line from which he must stand firm.

The communications competency requires that strategic leaders possess the "ability to exchange concepts by placing them in language understandable to an audience and the ability to listen, to hear accurately, and to seek"²² understanding. Strategic military leaders' actions and statements continuously come under scrutiny outside the organization. These leaders use

a variety of means to communicate with government agencies, Congress, political leadership, and the public. These means include: written and oral reports, meetings, public speaking, and news media interviews.²³ The ability to effectively communicate proves critical as strategic leaders negotiate, build consensus, and create mutual understanding.²⁴

The historical strategic leader chosen is General Marshall. Even though he predates the National Security Act of 1947 and Goldwater-Nichols legislation, the roles and functions he performed as Army Chief of Staff, along with the complexity of the external environment, provides an excellent subject for analysis of strategic leader competencies.

General George C. Marshall

As General Marshall assumed the duties of Chief of Staff in 1939 and began to apply his "whole new set of skills," it became clear that his success depended heavily on his ability to influence people and organizations outside of the military.²⁵ General Marshall brought to his new position a frame of reference based on his World War I experiences. He saw where America had been unprepared for war and felt that the U.S. suffered unnecessarily high casualties due to what he felt was a "criminal" lack of preparedness. He was determined never again to "allow America to be placed in this ghastly situation."²⁶ After WWI General Marshall was briefly exposed to the environment outside the Army while serving as General John J. Pershing's aide. He worked closely with General Pershing on the development

of the National Defense Act and helped present and defend it to Congress. Later, as Deputy and then as Acting Chief of Staff, Marshall interacted with the President and Congress on several occasions.²⁷

Competencies

In 1939 General Marshall faced a country and political leadership slowly awakening to the dangers of War in Europe and Japanese aspirations in the Pacific. The U.S. suffered from complacency and unpreparedness. The Army was in a poor state of readiness being supported by an infinitesimal war-related industrial base. The mood of the country and the Congress was decidedly isolationist, clinging to the belief that U.S. involvement in the war could be avoided. Additionally, the President was reluctant to pursue funding for a sizeable military and the War Department proved to be inefficient, unresponsive, and cumbersome in performing its duties.²⁸

Marshall's strategic vision saw a fully manned, trained, and equipped Army of sufficient size to deter war and, if deterrence failed, to conduct successful combat operations while expanding the Army using an efficient mobilization program. Preparing for war would require expanding the industrial base, reorganizing and expanding the Army in an orderly fashion, conducting large scale maneuvers, expanding the Army Air Corps, strengthening coordination with the Navy, and streamlining the War Department.²⁹ Though many of his earlier experiences would help him through this crisis, Marshall had to move beyond his previous

concepts and boundaries and develop a frame of reference that included an appreciation for the volatile, uncertain, and complex environment he was entering.³⁰

Political and Social Sensitivity

In order to realize this vision, General Marshall needed to develop the ability to effectively participate in the political processes of the Roosevelt Administration and Congress. Marshall recognized that he needed to be politically and socially sensitive and devoted a significant amount of time discussing this subject with the military leadership.³¹ It took time to develop this sensitivity, often at the expense of progress towards his vision. However, Marshall's growing expertise in this competency can be shown by the way he developed the ability to: determine when and how to approach Congress; change laws that inhibited progress toward his vision; understand the manner in which the President conducted business; and network with senior leaders to influence the political process.

General Marshall gradually developed an appreciation for the timing of when and how to approach Congress with bills and appropriation requests. He proceeded cautiously in early 1940 as he anticipated a strong fight in Congress over the \$850 million budget request. Marshall advised his staff members "to be patient in their approach to Congress, saying that their bills might fare better if left to the last possible date."³² Marshall correctly anticipated that the events in Europe would positively effect Congressional action.

Marshall developed the understanding necessary to get laws modified to meet the needs of an expanding Army. Essential to Marshall's vision was the ability to remove unfit officers from service who failed to demonstrate physical or leadership ability. The National Defense Act inhibited Marshall's ability to remove unfit leaders. Marshall pushed a bill through Congress to eliminate this road block. Another obstacle to junior officer development was the Army's prewar seniority based promotion policy. This was a special obstacle to developing the quality officers necessary to meet the needs of an expanding Army. The original bill introduce to Congress had been pigeonholed in the House Military Affairs Committee due to pressure on the chairman from officers Marshall planned not to promote. Marshall successfully enlisted the help of Senator James Byrnes of South Carolina to redraft an amendment to an appropriations act to include this policy change.³³

Marshall quickly realized that the President preferred to have informal relations with key cabinet members and close advisors. Roosevelt often made fun of those individuals, dismissing their ideas when they did not appeal to him. Marshall chose to maintain a formal approach, desiring a relationship based on mutual respect. Initially, this approach made it difficult for Marshall to establish a productive working relationship with the President. Marshall's unwavering formality would slowly develop a relationship with Roosevelt based on mutual respect and a deep trust in Marshall's judgement.³⁴ This

relationship with the President significantly improved as Marshall began to more forcefully present his positions. A defining moment occurred in May 1940 when Marshall and Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Morgenthau, met with the President to discuss a \$675 million appropriation critical to Army expansion. Roosevelt brushed Marshall aside stating "'there is no necessity for me to hear him (Marshall) at all'. . . . Marshall walked over to the President's chair, looked down at him and said 'Mr. President may I have three minutes'"³⁵ Marshall's forcefully identified the critical Army needs breaking the Presidential logjam, and gaining Roosevelt's strong support for that and future Army appropriation requests.

As Marshall became more politically and socially skilled in the political process, he developed an appreciation for networking with senior leaders to influence the political process. Marshall sought the advice of Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau. Morgenthau believed that the War Department had presented the total military requirements in a "piece meal" fashion to the President. He encouraged Marshall to present a more balanced and complete proposal for American national defense. With Morgenthau's assistance, Marshall successfully sold that program to the President and Congress.³⁶ Marshall also used prominent civilians to take the lead on controversial issues with Congress. He enlisted the assistance of Grenville Clark, a influential New York lawyer to introduce the Burke-Wadsworth bill in June 1940. This bill provided for a year of service for

1,400,000 men to include federalizing the National Guard. The passage of this bill was critical to the Army's continued preparation for World War II.³⁷

Consensus Building

Marshall's ability to build consensus with the President, key players in the Administration, and Congress would prove critical to achieving his goal of a fully manned, trained, and equipped Army. Marshall's mastery of this competency took time. He recognized that part of building consensus with the political leadership required building understanding not only with the President and Congress, but, as will be discussed later in this paper, with the press and American people, as well.

Marshall's major challenge was to obtain the funding necessary to properly equip the expanding Army, initially encountering great difficulty in building consensus among the President and the Congress. To develop the understanding necessary to gain Presidential approval, Marshall recognized that in the long run it was more important for him to work as a member of the President's team, building consensus within the team rather than taking action publicly. He supported the President's cautious policy on discussing Army appropriations with the public, while vigorously fighting for the Army's needs within the Administration. Consequently, he expended significant energies building understanding of the issues and eventual consensus for his plan with the President. Marshall used his personal powers of persuasion to include presenting the issues in clear and

concise terms the President could understand. Additionally, he sought assistance on difficult issues from Roosevelt's inner circle thereby gaining support of Army proposals and additional access to the President. Individuals, such as Secretary Hopkins, proved critical in helping to present the military position in a plainer more understandable fashion to the President, eventually gaining Roosevelt's approval and strong support.³⁸

Once Marshall gained Presidential approval, he used every opportunity offered to build understanding and consensus among the Congress for the funding requests. As Marshall continued to meet with stiff Congressional opposition, he turned to Congressional testimony, public speeches, and radio broadcasts to build the understanding necessary to successfully represent the Administration's proposal. He consistently presented the theme of past American unpreparedness and its costs. He grabbed headlines when he identified that less than 25 percent of the Army was combat ready and reiterated the long lead times between initially ordering and receiving the modern equipment required for the American soldier. However, Congress responded by cutting the President's proposal by 10 percent.³⁹

Marshall needed to restore these cuts and gain support for future requests. He recognized that it was his role as Chief of Staff to convince Congress of the Army needs. He asked Mr. Bernard Baruch, a successful businessman and advisor to the political leadership, to set up a meeting with a group of influential Senators. The meeting on the night of 10 April 1940

lasted until early the next morning. Marshall eloquently outlined the world situation and Army requirements to the Senators. This meeting became a key turning point in convincing Congress of the urgent need for rapidly increasing the preparedness of the Army. Senator Adams, a strong critique of preparedness, remarked to Marshall that "you came before the committee without even a piece of paper and you got every damned thing you asked for."⁴⁰

Marshall realized that in order to achieve the long-term vision, compromising on lesser important issues would be required. In April 1940 the President approved about 75% of Marshall's proposals to include a 15,000 man increase. At a later, more favorable time Marshall gained approval for the remaining 38,000 men. Additionally, the President agreed to request additional funds later in the year to make up the initial shortfall. Marshall initially accepted partial achievement of organizational goals recognizing that full achievement would often be attained as the dynamics of world events caused a favorable shift in Presidential and Congressional attitudes. Marshall "never haggled with the President, . . . he swallowed the little things so he could go to bat on the big ones."⁴¹

Negotiations

Marshall realized that the appropriations battles of 1940 required him to rely heavily on negotiation skills to obtain favorable results. He needed to protect Presidential

appropriation requests against heavy economic slashes by providing arguments that would convince Congress to maintain appropriate funding levels.⁴² Critical to his successful negotiations was gaining an understanding for the perspective of Congress while maintaining his ability to stand firm on what he felt to be non-negotiable issues.

Marshall's ability to stand firm on non-negotiable issues proved key in his effort towards preparedness. He took a forthright stand with the President on the issue of aircraft production, insisting that the aircraft industry give first priority to defense of the country. Initially reluctant, the President eventually concluded that Marshall assessment was correct and strongly supported this position. When President Roosevelt and the Congress strongly resisted appropriation increases, Marshall's forceful stands with the President, and persistent and steadfast position on this issue with Congress resulted in appropriations being approved and eventually meeting wartime preparedness requirements.⁴³

Communications

General Marshall ability to communicate in a clear and persuasive manner with the President, Congress, government agencies, and the American people enhanced his ability to build consensus and negotiate. He communicated the requirements to support his vision through: written documents to the President and Congress, meetings and testimony, interviews with the media and public speaking engagements. Over time, Marshall mastered

each aspect of communications and when coupled with his high degree of persuasion successfully gained support for his proposals.

Marshall's clear and concise written communications during the appropriation battles of 1940 helped persuade a reluctant Congress to support the President's appropriation request. In 1941, Marshall's clever use of a usually bland Army annual report helped clearly convey to Congress the issues associated with a rapidly expanding Army. Marshall used this report to illustrate in simple straight forward terms how the Army had grown and the issues Congress needed to address.⁴⁴

Marshall's ability to communicate at meetings and during Congressional testimony continually improved. He established relationships with the President and Congress based on his lack of ulterior motives, their trust in his judgement, and mutual respect. Additionally, he took the Senators and Congressmen into his confidence by candidly discussing the issues associated with Army requirements. "Marshall acted and talked the way they believed a leader should."⁴⁵

After the War Department changed the policy allowing the Chief of Staff to conduct press conferences, General Marshall used this avenue to build understanding for his programs. He conducted weekly press conferences in a honest and frank manner. He took the press into his confidence and was able to get his message across to the American people.⁴⁶

The Army's change in preparedness during the prewar years

can not be solely attributed to Marshall's ability as a strategic leader. Other strategic leaders, along with the rapid German successes, had a significant impact on the American response. However, General Marshall's ability to harness those critical competencies provided the strategic leadership necessary to drive this change.

Impact of Goldwater-Nichols

The Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 corrected many of the organizational and structural deficiencies identified by political and military leaders as a result of the National Security Act of 1947. Goldwater-Nichols changed the responsibility to provide military counsel from the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) as a corporate body to the Chairman of the JCS. The elimination of this corporate body approach proved to be a significant change. It eliminated the old system where advice to the NCA was consensus driven and frequently resulted in advice that every Service Chief would accept but the Secretary of Defense and President found of little value. As the principle advisor, the Chairman was no longer required to provide a consensus opinion, and was encouraged but not required to seek advice from the Service Chiefs and the CINCs. The Service Chiefs were still considered advisors and could provide their advice separately when they disagreed with the Chairman.⁴⁷

These changes not only enhanced the position of CJCS but also assigned functions to the CJCS that had previously been the responsibility of the "corporate chiefs". Duties such as

assisting the President and Secretary of Defense in strategic direction, strategic planning, and contingency planning as well as providing advice on requirements, programs, and budgets now were placed directly on the shoulders of the Chairman.⁴⁸ Even though the Chairman was not in the chain of command to the CINCs, the President and Secretary could and, so far, have decided to direct that all orders pass through the Chairman to the CINCs.⁴⁹

The changes required by the Goldwater-Nichols Act impact on strategic leader competencies in several ways. First it requires a commitment to jointness and joint requirements from the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and CINCs.⁵⁰ This commitment means that their frame of reference as strategic leaders must shift to include a better understanding of all Services and their relationship to National Military Strategy requirements. These strategic leaders are now required to represent a much larger and more complex organization to the NCA and Congress. Additionally, the dynamics of consensus building between the CJCS, Service Chiefs, and CINCs and the manner in which senior military leaders meet their redefined responsibilities for providing military council would change profoundly.

General Colin L. Powell

In the late summer of 1989 General Colin L. Powell followed Admiral William Crowe as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He became the first "full time" Chairman to exercise the enhanced power and influence inherent in the expanded role under Goldwater-Nichols. Powell brought a frame of reference to this

position based on his military experience from platoon leader to FORSCOM Commander, as well as his experience initially as Deputy and later as the National Security Advisor (NSA) to President Reagan. As the NSA, he saw first hand where the watered-down consensus recommendations of the JCS often failed to meet the policy maker's needs.⁵¹ He was resolve not to allow this to happen during his period as Chairman. General Powell fully realized that, under the Goldwater-Nichols reform, it became his role to initiate the change in strategy required to respond to rapidly changing world events.⁵²

Competencies

In 1989 JCS was struggling to develop an appropriate response to the rapidly changing world environment. General Powell recognized that the challenges associated with an accelerated decline in defense funding, historical changes in the Soviet Union, and growing regional issues were driving JCS to strongly consider significant force reductions. Based on perceptions developed while serving as National Security Advisor, General Powell projected radical changes in the world by 1994. Going beyond simple force reductions, he was determined to fully meet his duties as Chairman by developing a new national military strategy and supporting concept for force structure that would meet policy maker's needs.⁵³ He envisioned major restructuring of US security policy, strategy, force posture, and capabilities centered around a Base Force concept. This Base Force would provide policy makers the ability to remain engaged worldwide

while reducing the size of the armed forces to a level, below which they should not go.⁵⁴

Political and Social Sensitivity

General Powell received significant exposure to the political and social sensitivities required prior to assuming his role as CJCS. As the National Security Advisor, he actively and effectively participated in the interdepartmental process of national security policy formulation and execution. Clearly, he possessed and demonstrated the ability to advise the President on policy development, strategy, and resourcing issues. Similar to Marshall, Powell recognized his role as a "political general." and that he represented his organization in a political environment characterized by compromise and debate. As he began to build consensus for his vision, Powell gained a greater appreciation for both the political and public relations context in which national security strategy exists.⁵⁵

In April 1990, General Powell recognized the mounting pressure from both Congress and the press to obtain the promised "peace dividend" and counter growing criticism that DoD was not "in-tune" with changing world events. Key to his successful implementation of his vision would be his appreciation of how consensus is reached in the US political system. He saw where consensus for the Base Force could be built by convincing the American people and Congress for the need of continued US world wide engagement. Congress would determine the will of the people and then work through the Administration to set or redefine

national security policy. Powell would first build consensus within DoD and the Administration for his vision. He would then present this position to "...Congress, begin a debate with the Congress, make compromises with the Congress, try to reach a consensus all the while listening to what the American people are saying."⁵⁶ While Powell finished refining the concept of the Base Force and attempted to set the terms of the debate with Congress, he began addressing these criticisms by publicly explaining to the American people his concept.⁵⁷

Consensus

Similar to Marshall, Powell recognized the need to build consensus for his vision with the President, key players in the Administration and Congress. He also clearly recognized the requirement to build understanding and consensus with the press and the American people. However, unlike Marshall, Powell faced the additional challenge of building or forcing consensus within DoD to include with the Service Chiefs and the CINCs. He would have the opportunity to fully exercise the responsibilities of the CJCS as envisioned by the Goldwater-Nichols Act.

In early November 1989, Powell realized he needed to take the lead to institute the first change in national strategy and associated force restructuring in over 40 years. Congress, independent think tanks, free-lance military experts, and career bureaucrats began to generate strategy proposals. Powell strongly desired to maintain control over the destiny of defense strategy and programs. He realized that an overarching strategic

vision agreed to by the Secretary of Defense, the President, and eventually the Congress would be required. With minimal consultation with the Service Chiefs, Powell developed and presented to the NCA a "Strategic Overview-1994" which contained his basic concepts for major adjustments to US strategy.

Even though he achieved initial agreement from both Secretary of Defense Cheney and the President on this concept, he had "blindsided" the Service Chiefs by failing to keep them informed. Powell needed to shift his focus to gain support for the strategy and the associated force structure modification not only with Congress but also within the organization he represented.⁵⁸ Even though Goldwater-Nichols encouraged but did not require the Chairman to seek advice from the Service Chiefs and the CINCs, General Powell realized that the radical changes he envisioned necessitated common understanding and some level of consensus. Consensus with the Service Chiefs and CINCs did not come easy. Besides traditional service parochialism, the Service Chiefs and CINCs did not initially share the new Chairman's views on the changing world order. Key to building this consensus would be to develop a common understanding of the changes in the world environment, the reality of shrinking defense dollars, and their resultant impact on military strategy and force requirements. Powell occasionally made concessions with the Services, however, he maintained his focus on the desired end state. Additionally, the Chairman did not hesitate to utilize the enhanced authority granted him by Goldwater-Nichols as the

principle military advisor to the Secretary and President. When consensus on certain issues proved too difficult, he would not hesitate to provide his advice or present an alternative fiscal proposal. By November 1990 the services were directed to implement the Base Force.⁵⁹

Similar to Marshall's approach, Powell used every opportunity to build understanding and consensus among the Congress and American people for his vision. He realized that he needed to address Congressional and public criticism and desired to set the terms of the upcoming debates with Congress. In two public speeches in March 1990, Powell presented the rationale for the Base Force emphasizing a warning against too rapid a reduction in force structure.⁶⁰ Powell continued to build public understanding and consensus for his vision during the next two years, which included the Persian Gulf crisis. Through Pentagon press releases, public speaking engagements, interviews with the media, and Congressional testimony he consistently highlighted five interrelated themes crucial to understanding his vision: irreversible changes in world affairs, need for a new US Strategy of engagement, Base Force requirements, gradual pace of downsizing, and realistic expectations for a peace dividend. Additionally, General Powell regularly testified before Congress concerning the Base Force. He established a significant amount of credibility based on his NSA background and his capacity to project a sense of authority and frankness.⁶¹

Negotiations

General Powell faced significant Congressional challenges to the Base Force proposal. Critical to meeting these challenges was gaining an understanding of the motivation behind this Congressional resistance while maintaining the ability to stand firm on two key issues: rate of reduction to Base Force levels and downsizing the reserve component.⁶²

In the fall of 1991 Congressional pressure to receive an immediate peace dividend began to increase. Additionally, domestic pressure over discretionary spending, coupled with the implication of the upcoming 1992 elections, put enormous pressure on Congressional leaders to make further reductions in the 1994 defense budget. General Powell and the Service Chiefs realized that Congressional action to significantly increase the rate of reduction of the Base Force would put U.S. security at risk. They repeatedly testified before Congress highlighting that the current rate was stretching the services to the limit and any further acceleration would break the force. Powell appreciated the need to bring the force down in size according to the threat and the amount of resources the American people were willing to invest in defense. However, he continued to use every opportunity to state his strong conviction that constricting too rapidly, would create a hollow force structure.⁶³

Reserve force expansion in the 80's, designed to provide reinforcements in event of a European war, were no longer required. Powell identified that the Congressional motivation

to keep as much reserve component structure as possible centered around its attraction politically. As with the rate of force reduction, Powell aggressively negotiated with Congress to gain the support necessary for bringing the reserve force structure in-line with the Base Force concept.⁶⁴

Communications

General Powell's ability to persuasively communicate with the President, Congress, and the American people enhanced his ability to build consensus and negotiate. Like Marshall, he communicated the requirements to support his vision through written documents to the President and Congress, meetings and testimony, interviews with the media and public speaking engagements. Powell's creative use of the Base Force concept, and ability to consistently explain requirements in terms clearly understandable to his audiences, help him build consensus, establish credibility, and negotiate successfully with the NCA, and Congress.

The U.S. transition to a successful Post-Cold War strategy and force structure should not be attributed solely to Powell's efforts. However, his ability to implement his vision by effectively operating in the external environment facilitated this difficult transition to a National Military Strategy and associated force structure responsive to policy maker's needs.

Analysis

Both Generals Marshall and Powell successfully operated in

the environment external to their organization, skillfully accomplishing their strategic leader tasks of managing national-level relationships and representing their organizations in a manner that increases understanding. They successfully influenced senior political leaders, providing advice on national military strategy and force structure issues that proved responsive to the policy maker's needs. In analyzing the strategic leader competencies involved, many enduring similarities as well as a few differences become apparent.

The ability of both Marshall and Powell to gain an appreciation for and shift their frame reference to outside the organization proved critical to their ability to operate in their new surroundings. This appreciation developed over time, and for both, included purely military experiences and early periods of exposure to national policy level issues. General Powell's prior assignments were better tailored to meet the demands of his position than General Marshall's background. At first glance, General Powell's background seems an aberration, however, recent trends in civil-military relations to include the impact of the Goldwater-Nichols Act clearly indicates that the integration of political awareness will continue to occur and become more vital for officers at lower levels.⁶⁵

The development of political and social sensitivity remained critical for both Marshall and Powell. Marshall initially struggled to develop and properly utilize this competency, suffering several setbacks. However, as he developed his "new

set of skills," his effectiveness within the Roosevelt Administration and with Congress mushroomed. On the other hand, Powell possessed this competency prior to assuming the role of CJCS. Additionally, he felt comfortable operating in the Bush Administration, since many of the actors remained from the Reagan years. Powell's main challenge was not only developing a sensitivity for the Goldwater-Nichols Act implications but actually shaping the enhanced responsibilities the legislation granted his position. Powell gradually developed a balance between expectations of the Administration and Congressional Leaders with the needs and expectations of the Service Chiefs and CINCs. It appears that this struggle for proper balance will continue to be a critical issue that both the strategic political and military leaders must resolve.

Consensus building consumed the vast majority of time for both Marshall and Powell. Both used their powers of persuasion to influence not only the President and Congressional leadership, but the American people as well. Each identified the need to build understanding for their vision and invested significant energies in meetings, testimony, media interviews, press conferences, and public speeches. Once Marshall's restriction on access to the press was lifted, he judicially used the media to build public understanding. By 1990 the variety of media coverage and potential for exposure had significantly expanded since the days of Marshall. Powell recognized that in his environment it was expected that he actively represent his

organization through the media and public speeches.

Each developed and articulated an easily understandable expression of their vision and used a wide variety of means to present it. Both were willing to compromise on lesser issues realizing that, over time, the critical parts of their vision would be achieved. Networking appeared to be a major tool used by Marshall. While researching Powell's pursuit of the Base Force, little evidence on networking could be found. However, Powell's exposure as National Security Advisor and this author's decision to restrict the research to unclassified sources may account for either the lack of networking on Powell's part or the failure of this researcher to identify this technique. Additionally, Marshall focused his energies on building consensus outside the organization. Threats from the world environment and political inactivity drove him to do so. Powell, on the other hand, needed to build or force consensus both internally and externally. Implications of the Goldwater-Nichols Act, rapidly changing world environment, and US political reality caused him to build consensus on multiple fronts.

Both Marshall and Powell recognized the need to develop an understanding of the positions of other actors in the strategic arena. During their negotiations with the Administration and Congress they established clear positions and showed the willingness to compromise on lesser issues. However, both clearly identified to the political leadership non-negotiable issues on which they stood firm.

Both Marshall and Powell communicated requirements to support their visions through written documents to the President and Congress, meetings and testimony, interviews with the media and public speaking engagements. However, Powell operated in an environment where the ability to communicate over multiple media offered him an expanded opportunity to build understanding and consensus with the American people and Congress. This is not to say that Powell's consensus task was easier, but simply reflects the fact that as communication technology changes so must the techniques used by the strategic military leader.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study examined the competencies required to function in the external environment by analyzing a historical and a current example of the interactions between senior political and strategic military leaders. This study's analysis supports the competencies as outlined in FM 22-103 as valid and an accurate reflection of the requirements to successfully interact with senior political leaders. The success of both Marshall and Powell reflect their ability to rapidly develop an appreciation for the shift in frame of reference and for the political and social sensitivities necessary to operate in the external environment. Both had been exposed to the external environment during assignments as a junior officers. Consensus building, negotiations, and communications competencies proved to be the major tools used by both Marshall and Powell. These abilities were instrumental in developing the understanding for their

vision within the Administration, the Congress, and the American people. Without mastery of these competencies, their successes would have been significantly limited.

Based on the insights gained from this study several recommendations concerning FM 22-103 and officer development are provided. The definitions of negotiations and consensus building found in FM 22-103 proved confusing and confounded. Study, analysis, and development of these competencies relies on understanding what they are and how they should be used. During the research for this paper, several references used these terms interchangeably. FM 22-103 needs to more clearly differentiate between these two competencies. Additionally, FM 22-103 initially identifies the competencies required of the strategic leader without first establishing the tasks that must be performed. The manual fails to recognize that the tasks the strategic leader must accomplish determines what competencies are required. Recommend that the chapters be sequenced to first describe the tasks to be performed, then describe the supporting competencies.

Development of strategic leader competencies began early in both Marshall's and Powell's careers. Through the military educational system and exposure to the external environment in a variety of assignments the developmental seeds for political sensitivity, consensus building, negotiations, and communications were planted and nurtured. Several steps can be taken to enhance the development of these skills earlier in an officer's career

development.

Marshall's and Powell's early exposure to the external environment through assignments at the Service, JCS, and DoD level provided experiences that prepared them for transition to the strategic level of leadership. In the development of future strategic leaders, assignments on the Joint Staff, DoD, and other similar positions should continue to be stressed. Additionally, the challenges facing future strategic military leaders may demand that capable officers be identified and exposed to the political and social environment external to the organization earlier in their careers.

Command and General Staff College offers the first glimpse of translating National Security Policy into operational designs. Incorporating the study of the role of the strategic leader along with requisite competencies will familiarize this level of officer with the skill that will be gradually developed over their follow-on assignments. Additionally, at the War College level, courses tailored to develop consensus building, negotiations, and communication competencies need emphasis.

Today's strategic leader faces a critical time for our military. Radical world changes, rapidly declining defense budgets, issues of jointness, and the revolutions in warfare characterize the strategic environment. The two leaders discussed in this paper faced equally volatile situations, successfully developing and applying strategic leader competencies to meet the demands of their time. Continued

mastery of these competencies should prove critical to ensuring that the military continues to play an active role in national security policy development and execution.

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